

June 1-3, 2013

Please note that news sites update their hyperlinks, so it is advised that articles of interest be read soon as they might not be accessible later.

The Detroit News: OUR EDITORIAL: Clean up the mess in 36th District Court

"The 36th District Court in Detroit is one of the busiest in the United States, processing over a million filings a year. It's also one of the worst managed, with a mounting deficit of \$4.5 million and a meager 7 percent collection rate on fines. That's a dichotomy that should end under Michigan Appeals Judge Michael J. Talbot. The Michigan Supreme Court appointed Talbot a special judicial administrator with 'superintending control' to pull the court out of its financial and operational quagmire."

Full story

Also see:

Court of Appeals Judge Michael J. Talbot appointed to serve as special administrator of Detroit's 36th District Court; aims to address court's financial crisis

Press release

The MiLW Blog: SCAO names administrator for new Region V

"Attorney Jill M. Booth has been named administrator of the State Court Administrative Office's new Region V. The new Region V will include Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Eaton, Kalamazoo, Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, St. Joseph and Van Buren counties. The redrawing of administrative districts for the state court system goes into effect July 1."

Full story

Also see:

Jill M. Booth named new Region V Administrator for State Court Administrative Office

Press release

The Detroit Legal News: Court names executive director for Board of Law Examiners

"Attorney Jana L. Benjamin, a former admissions officer for the University of Michigan Law School, has been named executive director of the Board of Law Examiners, the Michigan Supreme Court announced Thursday. As the BLE's first executive director, Benjamin will assist the BLE board to oversee and administer the bar examination, which is given twice a year."

Full story

Also see:

Jana L. Benjamin named Executive Director, Board of Law Examiners

Press release

The Detroit News: Briefs: State Supreme Court orders 2007 murder case to be reopened

"The Michigan Supreme Court has made a key ruling that reopens a criminal case handled by law students at the University of Michigan. Dawan Tyner is serving at least 22 years in prison for second-degree murder in Detroit."

Full story

Also see:

Oakland County Legal News: Case handled by Mich. law students is revived

Full story

The Detroit News: Lawyer: Detroit cop devastated after shooting Aiyana

"... Meanwhile, jurors have been barred from taking notes during the trial. Wayne County Judge Cynthia Gray Hathaway gave the instruction Monday before opening statements in the trial on Monday. She didn't explain why. The Michigan Supreme Court in 2011 changed the rules and greatly encouraged judges to allow jurors to take notes. Chief Justice Robert Young Jr. says note-taking is a basic tool in determining the truth during a trial."

Full story

Also see:

The Detroit News: Editorial: Judge benches First Amendment (third article)

Full story

Detroit Free Press: Trial in death of Aiyana Stanley-Jones begins; jury to decide accident or criminal negligence

Full story

Associated Press: Jury in Detroit cop's trial can't take notes

Full story

The Detroit News: Supreme Court: Police can take DNA samples from arrestees

"A sharply divided [U.S.] Supreme Court on Monday said police can continue to take DNA from people they arrest without getting a warrant. The court's five-justice majority said DNA testing was a legitimate police arrest procedure, like fingerprinting."

Full story

Also see:

Detroit Free Press: Supreme Court OKs DNA swab for serious arrests

Full story

The Detroit News: Nolan Finley: Wayne County in talks to scrap partially built jail in Detroit

"Wayne County is working on a deal with the state to bail itself out of its wildly over-budget new jail project and instead take over and renovate a state prison in Detroit. The jail construction on the northeast side of downtown is already well under way, with parts of five floors built and five new cells being completed every day. The county has spent well over \$100 million to this point."

Full story

The Detroit News: Man resentenced in Pontiac death; Murder conviction, life term set aside over witness issue

"... A murder conviction and mandatory life term for Daniel 'Little Dog' Butler, 33, were set aside after prosecutors acknowledged a man who claimed he saw the gunfire outside a Pontiac biker club on Jan. 20, 2007, had been in prison at the time."

Full story

The Alpena News: Presque Isle closer to having courthouse plan

"Presque Isle County employees will meet with an architect next week to discuss plans for a new county courthouse. Lisa Wrate of U.P. Engineering and Architects presented county commissioners the drawings of a proposed new courthouse at their meeting Friday."

Full story

Associated Press: New sentences ordered in deaths of homeless men

"Two young men convicted as teenagers in the killing of homeless men in Pontiac will get new sentences. Dontez Tillman and Thomas McCloud are serving mandatory no-parole sentences. But the U.S. Supreme Court has said mandatory punishments like those are illegal for teens convicted of murder.... The Michigan appeals court made rulings Friday."

Full story

Note: The article also ran in the Herald-Palladium/St. Joseph and the Midland Daily News.

Associated Press: UP hotel cleared in fall during Sunday brunch

"The Michigan appeals court has a message for an Upper Peninsula woman who was injured while carrying a slice of cheesecake — and it's not as sweet as the dessert. The court says Bonnie Campbell has no cause of action against a Holiday Inn in Marquette."

Full story

Note: The article also ran in the Traverse City Record-Eagle.

Associated Press: New \$150K public art at Ann Arbor's Justice Center

"A new sculpture is in place at the Ann Arbor Justice Center. Portland, Ore.,-based artist Ed Carpenter completed installing 'Radius' last weekend, according to AnnArbor.com. The piece is 40 by 20 by 12 feet and made of dichroic glass, aluminum, stainless steel and LED lights."

Full story

Note: The article also ran in the Macomb Daily.

Also see:

The MiLW Blog: Not everyone pleased with Justice Center's \$150K art purchase

Full story

The Daily Press/Escanaba: Board looks at budget concerns

"... The board also met with Circuit Court Judge Stephen Davis, who noted his department has been doing better than anticipated and has been controlling its costs. According to Davis, one item the court wishes to purchase under the current 2012-13 budget is a new court reporter desk.... He also noted the need for a new jury commission program for use in the department, which will cost \$1,200."

Full story

Grand Haven Tribune: Brandon Hall faces charges

"Brandon Hall was arraigned on the felony charges in 58th District Court on May 22. The investigation centered on fraudulent signatures on a ballot petition for a Grand Haven attorney, Chris Houghtaling, who was running for a vacant judge seat in Ottawa County's 58th District Court last year. Houghtaling was removed from the ballot after the signatures were flagged by the attorney general's office."

Full story

Also see:

The Holland Sentinel: Grand Haven man charged with election forgery in failed bid for 58th District Court judge seat

Full story

Hometown Life Newspapers: Sobriety Court graduates look forward to new life

"It's not easy for adults to drastically change their life. When complicated with an alcohol problem, change is twice as tough. That's why the 47th District Court's Sobriety Court Program had a graduation ceremony for three Farmington-Farmington Hills residents Wednesday night in the Farmington Hills City Council Chambers."

Full story

Huron Daily Tribune/Bad Axe: Circuit court renovation work now complete

"The Huron County Circuit Court room renovations are complete, and Commissioner Steve Vaughan said he has heard 'nothing but compliments.' Vaughan, who acts as the properties chair for the board, said the renovation included new furniture, electrical work, dry wall, carpet and a mural of the courthouse in the 1950s."

[*Full story*](#)

Also see:

The MiLW Blog: Huron County courtroom gets facelift

[*Full story*](#)

Lansing State Journal: People News: Exchange Club of Lansing marks 92 years

"The Exchange Club of Lansing recently held its annual recognition dinner, celebrating more than 92 years of service to the Lansing community.... The Child Advocate of the Year award went to Ingham County Circuit Court Chief Judge Janelle Lawless. She was recognized for her ability to protect children who have been abused and implementing programs to prevent child abuse and neglect."

[*Full story*](#)

The Macomb Daily: Shelby Township auto shop robbery convictions upheld

"The state appeals court has upheld the convictions of a man who conspired with another man to rob his cousin's Shelby Township auto repair shop, according to a ruling released Friday. Sokol J. Gojcaj, 33, is serving 10 years in prison and Rodney G. Wilson, 23, is serving nearly seven years for the October 2008 robbery of the Icon Auto Center off Van Dyke Avenue."

[*Full story*](#)

The MiLW Blog: County can't ignore taxpayer-township tax tribunal settlement

"A Michigan Tax Tribunal consent judgment based on a settlement between Sal-Mor Royal Village and Macomb Township binds the Macomb County treasurer, according to a recent Michigan Court of Appeals decision."

[*Full story*](#)

Midland Daily News: Program addresses substance abuse, kids

"A local five-year pilot program aimed at reducing substance abuse by kids and making sure their futures stay bright has begun. Recovering Youth Futures, a project of Midland Kids First, is looking to get the word out about the program, the idea of which is to reach Midland County kids between the ages of 10 and 17 who have drug or alcohol problems before they become involved in the court system."

[*Full story*](#)

Oakland County Legal News: Straker Bar to honor four with Trailblazer Awards

"The D. Augustus Straker Bar Association will honor Oakland County 46th District Court Judge Shelia Johnson, Earlene Baggett-Hayes, Reginald M. Turner, and Lawrence C. Mann with its annual Trailblazer Awards on Thursday, June 13, starting at 5 p.m. at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham. The award honors outstanding individuals who are trailblazers in the legal community."

[*Full story*](#)